

Old Provo Road Met Big Need

By LaDawn Ercanbrack

At a time when plans are being made for an improved highway in Provo Canyon, it is interesting to recall over 111 years ago when the first road through the canyon was built, and why the pioneers saw a need for such a road.

Provo, which had its beginning in 1849, grew until about 1857 when some of the townspeople felt that all the choice land had been claimed. Newly arriving settlers began looking toward "greener pastures" on the other side of the Wasatch Mountains.

On the other side was the rough wilderness country of Provo Valley, so named because the headwaters of the Provo River ran through it, was later to become Wasatch County, a land of peaceful valleys and hard beginnings.

First Visitors

And so the valley was examined early in the 1850's by three men who climbed the Wasatch Range from Big Cottonwood Canyon and came down the western slopes of the valley. When they told others what they saw it created much interest and ways were soon sought to get into the valley.

By 1855 or '56 the pioneers began trailing their cattle into the valley by an Indian trail that began near Pleasant Grove, went up Grove Creek over the northwest end of Timpanogos, down Bear Canyon to the left fork of American Fork Canyon, up this canyon, to the summit and then down into the Midway area.

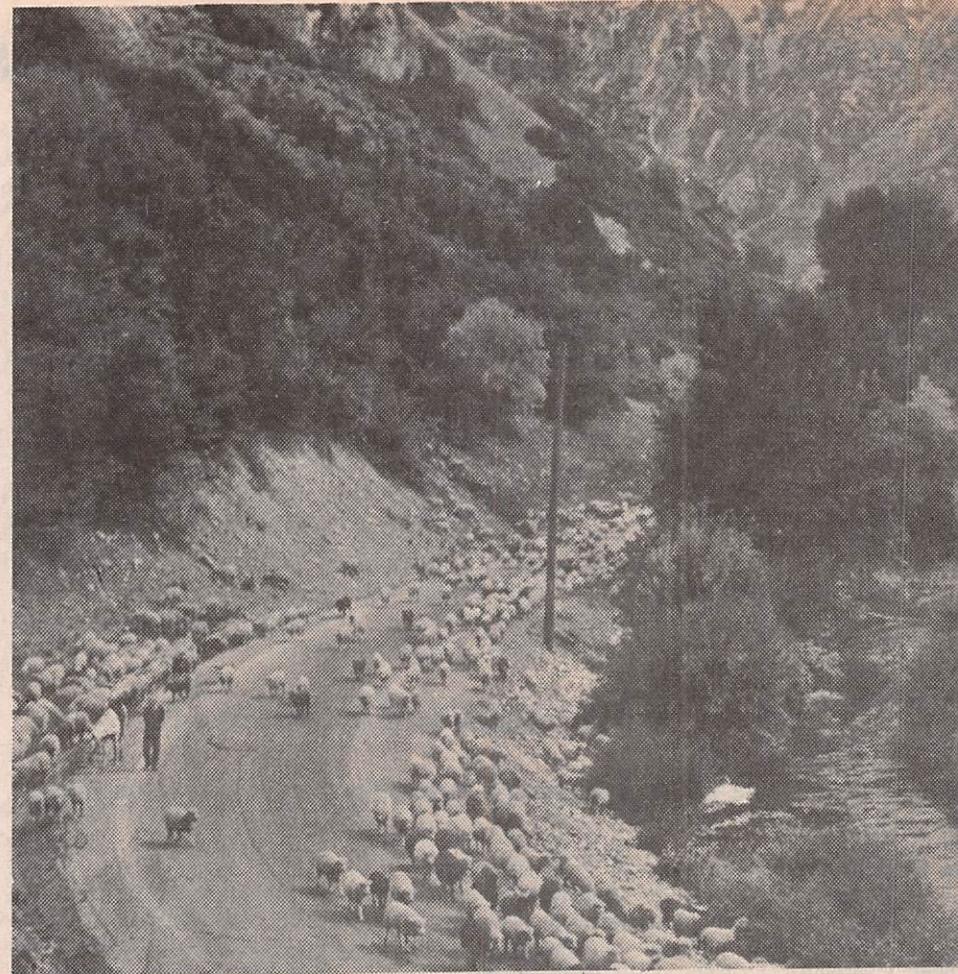
Hike For Look

One summer Sunday morning in 1857 a group of workmen at a sawmill in Big Cottonwood Canyon, southeast of Salt Lake Valley, decided to spend the day looking at the rumored "paradise land" nestled in the tops of the Wasatch range. The men, Charles N. Carroll, George Jaques, James Adams and others, hiked to the summit of the range and brought back glowing reports of a desirable agricultural valley.

Rumors still persisted that there was frost in the valley during every month of the year. However, the favorable reports of the sawmill workers, and others, made many people anxious to settle in the area.

First Ranches

During the spring of 1858 a group of cattlemen in Provo drove a herd of stock through the canyon and established some ranches at the south end of the valley. Those in the group included William Wall, George W. Dean, Aaron Daniels and a few others. With the idea of keeping their cattle in the valley during the winter these men harvested a crop of meadow hay.



THE CONSTRUCTION of the road up Provo Canyon to the Wasatch County area was a big boon to travelers and sheepmen and cattlemen

also took advantage of the new access summer grazing ranges, as is shown in this picture.

Wasatch lands, and with ranch sites already surveyed, the need for a road became an issue of primary importance. To win support for the project, a group of Provo men took the matter to President Brigham Young and explained both the hardships and the advantages of building such a road.

Brigham Young favored the project and on June 8, 1858 he called a meeting in the bowery at Provo and said, "A road up Provo Canyon is much needed, and we want 10 or 20 companies of laborers to go on it forthwith in order to finish it in about 15 days so that you can go into the valleys of the Weber where there is plenty of timber."

"I understand that a company has been chartered by the legislative assembly to make that road. If these men will come forward we will take the responsibility of making it. We shall need about 500 laborers."

Company Formed

The Provo Canyon Co. was formed the next evening. With President Young himself subscribing for 200 shares of stock. Feramorz Little was named superintendent of the project with W. G. Mills as clerk. A company of laborers was formed and the road, that was to go from Provo through Provo Canyon to the Kamas Bench and on the "Mormon Trail" to Weber Canyon, was begun. A total of \$19,000 was allocated for the cost of the road, much of which was paid for in "Deseret Script."

As the wagon ruts through the canyon were formed into a road, the laborers faced the necessity of building a bridge over the Provo River. It was decided to

place the bridge near the mouth of the canyon, and engineering work was begun immediately by Henry Grow, who later won fame for his construction of the Salt Lake Tabernacle.

Bridge Completed

When the bridge was completed in the first part of October of 1858 the Deseret News said in its edition of Oct. 13, 1858, that the bridge was "substantially and neatly made and calculated to be of service for many years

to the inhabitants of Utah County." And again on Nov. 12, 1858, the Deseret News said in its edition of Nov. 12, 1858, that the same year the road was completed enough completed that teamsters started for the United States over the new road.

(Deseret News, Nov. 12, 1858)

While the road saved miles for transcontinental travelers and teamsters and travelers in and out of Utah County, its important contribution came in opening up Wasatch County for permanent settlement.

Grandpa Rides Again...And How!

By OTTO E. STURM

WILLIAMSVILLE, N.Y.
(UPI)—Carrying nine pounds of
gar and spice, and everything
nice, can be more weighty than
you might think.

That is, if she's your first
grandchild. And if it's been
about 20 years since you last
held a babe in arms. The infant
and, anyway.

It was with that leave-
everything-to-me, don't-worry-
about-a-thing aplomb that I
volunteered to stay with three-
weeks-old Catherine Mary while
the rest of the family went to
church.

My son, the father, assured
me there'd be no problem. The
baby had been fed and was
sleeping peacefully in her crib.
"She shouldn't wake up," he
said. "But if she does, don't
rush to pick her up if she's just
crying and everything else
seems okay. Kids could get
spoiled that way." Okay, Dr.
pock, I thought.

They left and there was quiet
for about 15 minutes. It was
broken by a wail and sounds of
mini-struggle from the
adjoining bedroom. I went
there and looked into the crib.
At the flowing tears, the what-
are-they-doing-to-me expression
on the little face, the pathetic
dangling of tiny arms and legs.
What to do? Obey instinct
and pick her up? Maybe to be
labeled Grandpa, the Spoiler?
I flashed back to the many
times I had walked the floor.

Never mind if it was mainly to
spare the neighbors' eardrums.
But those were my kids. And
this is a new generation.

Generation! I began to
rationalize. Who knows, maybe
many of today's vociferous
young protesters are just giving
vent to delayed resentment at
having been left squalling in
their cribs.

I pictured little Cathy, grown
to beautiful (naturally) young
womanhood. But carrying a
picket sign calling for "down
with" whatever happens to be
up at the time; her usually
dulcet (naturally) voice raised
in defiant yells at the fuzz;
maybe even at a judge.

I had found my excuse.

But when I went to pick her
up the crib seemed 10 feet
deep. How to lift her out of it
safely? All I could remember of
my former know-how was the
admonition, "don't let the head
fall back." But what about the
rest of that helpless little body?
If I let it sag in the middle
would I be setting up future
trouble? Like curvature of the
spine, or something?

Fighting down these morbid
thoughts, I figured I'd better do
it quickly, like ripping off
adhesive plaster, to minimize
any unpleasant consequences. I
don't know how it happened,
but suddenly there she was,
safe and well-balanced, in the
crook of my arm. Sheer

instinct, no doubt.

I heard a happy little gurgle
and looked down just in time to
see her fall asleep with a
wondrous sigh of contentment. I
gazed at that tranquil counten-
ance and thought it's a good
thing we live 400 miles apart or
I just could spoil this kid
rotten.

Many paces later, a glance at
the clock made me decide to
put her down again against the
return of the new parents.

Apparently, word of the new
feminist movement hadn't
reached Cathy yet and as I
started putting her back in the
crib she indicated loudly that
she wanted no part of being
liberated. So I picked her up,
now like the old pro. Only a few
minutes later I heard the
approaching car. It was back to
the old crib again. This time,
bless her, she stayed asleep.

"Did she give you any
trouble?" asked Daddy when he
came in.

"Not a bit." I wasn't about to
tell them of near-panic. Or brag
about maybe saving some
future Establishment from a
potential nuisance.

So, my shaky first venture in
grandfatherly babysitting had a
happy ending, not the least of
which was a grateful thought:

There are times when it isn't
a bad thing at all for a girl to
leave a fellow high and dry.

Overseas Visitors To United States on Increase

WASHINGTON (UPI)—More
people than ever before visited
the United States from around
the world in 1969, according to
the Department of Commerce.

The total number of visitors,
as tourists or on business, was
1,752,842, an increase of 12.1 per
cent over 1968. In addition to
overseas visitors there were an
estimated 9.4 million from
Canada and 1,015,420 from
Mexico.

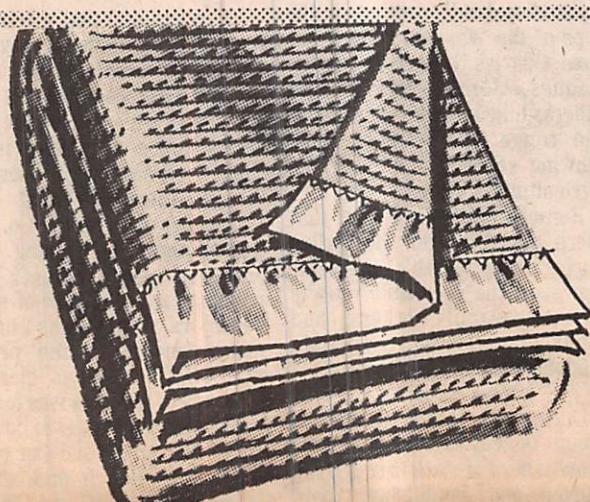
The greatest number of
overseas visitors came from
Britain, 253,184. Others includ-

ed: from West Germany
144,380, Japan 124,678, France
93,808, Italy 59,954, Venezuela
48,819, Australia 45,961, Colombia
43,385, Netherlands 39,997,
Argentina 38,261.

According to the Commerce
Department foreigners "most
wanted to see" New York, San
Francisco, Washington, Florida
and the Grand Canyon. The
Department also noted without
comment, "They are not
particularly interested in our
history or in historical land-
marks."

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During the spring and summer of 1858 a number of persons explored the area and decided it would be a satisfactory place to settle. The first steps toward settlement came in July, 1858, when a party headed by J.W. Snow, county surveyor in Provo, went to the valley and laid out a section of ground just north of the present site of Heber City. Twenty-acre tracts were surveyed and each man in the party selected his farm and during the spring of 1859 the first permanent settlers had crossed to the eastern slopes of the Wasatch Mountains to establish homes and farms in the Provo Valley.

Study Road

Having decided to settle in the valley, the men turned their attention to the feasibility of constructing a road through Provo Canyon. As early as 1852, an explorer, William Gardner, had recommended that such a road be constructed.

On the 19th of January, 1855 the State Legislature incorporated the Provo Canyon Road Co. which authorized Aaron Johnson, Thomas S. Williams, Evon M. Green and William Wall to construct a road from the mouth of Provo Canyon in Utah County to the Kamas prairie. From there it was to travel northeasterly in the most feasible route until it intercepted the main traveled road from the Great Salt Lake.

Unfortunately, this road was never begun. Misunderstandings with federal officials resulted in the appointment of Alfred Cumming as the territorial governor in 1857. He was escorted into Utah Territory by federal troops commanded by Gen. Albert Sidney Johnston. The presence of federal troops gave the Mormon people more to think about than building the road.

William M. Wall, (Wallsburg's namesake) had been called on a mission to Australia and returned late in 1857, having been called home due to the Johnston's Army affair. But by mid-1858, the troops were peacefully garrisoned at Camp Floyd near Utah Lake, the Mormon people had returned to normal living and he and others began talking about the road again.

Important Issue

With cattle grazing on the

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